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12 MAY 2005

MEMORANDUM

From: M. C. Husak, Commander
CGC Vigorous (WMEC 627)

To: Families, CGC Vigorous (WMEC 627)

Info: Crew, CGC Vigorous (Electronic Distribution)

Subj: CONTACTING CGC VIGOROUS (Current through July 2005)

Ref: (a) Coast Guard Regulations
(b) CGC Vigorous Cutter Organization Manual

1. Ahoy CGC Vigorous Families and Friends! Until we establish the 2005-2006 OMBUDSMAN team, here is some interim information to help with managing the next deployment. You should consider forwarding the information in this letter to family or friends. The information should also be provided to child sitting services you use, and you should consider sharing it with a neighbor that would assist you in a time of need.

2. We have a general information email-list you can join. As significant events happen, we will send electronic information. To be a part of this net, email shayes@cgcvigorous.uscg.mil and ask to be placed on the **OMBUDSMAN GENERAL EMAIL LIST**. Ensign Hayes is our Public Affairs Officer and will share information with families. I apologize if you have been depending on the local phone tree for updates, but we will need to use digital methods from sea. If you do not have a personal account, perhaps someone can help by relaying the information.

3. When the cutter is moored in Cape May, you may contact the day's *Officer of the Deck* at 609-898-6800 for assistance. That individual is always available and is trained to help resolve concerns. You also have access to the Commanding Officer (CDR Husak), Executive Officer (LCDR Birch), and Department Heads (LCDR Whittemore – engineering, LT Palmer – operations, LTJG Davila – deck, and ENS Ensley – support) if there is a need for greater discreteness. The Officer of the Deck can reach us for you.

a. **If there is a mishap involving the member, you should call the Officer of the Deck after you get professional help through local emergency numbers. We want to help you and your spouse, but can only do so if you notify us. I need to emphasize: CALL THE EMERGENCY SERVICE PROVIDER FIRST AND THE CUTTER SECOND!**

4. Contacting the cutter when we are underway is more complicated and subject to disruptions. Each member has an email account with the first letter of the first name and full last name (e.g. JSMITH@cgcvigorous.uscg.mil). Contact with the member is encouraged at sea, but understand the account is selectively monitored by software for security purposes and there is no privacy right. Also, it is illegal for the member to use chat services or to use other internet provider services through government computer equipment, even when initiated by others. Do not send large attachments through email, as the system rejects them in order to conserve bandwidth. As a basic rule: if you do not want to see the email in a newspaper, you should not send it. Expect up to 24-hour delays with email – there are times when we do not have a satellite connection or operations may keep individuals from checking their accounts.

5. When near shore, we allow members access to their cell phones. We cannot plan this availability, so you should not depend on it. Be careful about using cell phones to contact the member at sea. There may be additional and significant charges.

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6. You may find it necessary to contact the command first while CGC Vigorous is deployed. For example, you may desire to advise the command of a crisis so that we can notify the individual for you and help manage the emotional aspects of the event.

a. For deaths or medical emergencies, contact the *local Red Cross chapter* listed in the phone book. Tell them you need to contact a deployed member aboard the COAST GUARD CUTTER VIGOROUS (WMEC 627). The hospital you are working with can usually help with this process. A Red Cross message is required if you need the member home on emergency leave. We will not always be able to send the member ashore. However, deciphering that need starts with contacting the cutter. The Cape May Red Cross number is 609-465-7382 and their national toll free number is 877-272-7337, but using the office working with the hospital or funeral home handling your situation is probably best.

b. We have a constantly monitored email account in radio when deployed. You can reach the command through **msgs@cgcvigorous.uscg.mil** any time there is connectivity. This service may occasionally be temporarily interrupted. This is not for routine questions, but for significant events. The watch stander will relay the email to the Executive Officer for action. Title the email SENSITIVE FOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S EYES ONLY and then communicate the content as best as you can. State your desired result – what do you want to happen through this information exchange? Also, include return email addresses and phone numbers.

c. The Coast Guard Training Center Cape May Family Services Advocacy Representative, Ms. Judith Kunec, is also available to help. You may contact her at 609-898-6925 during normal work hours. She will have insight as to how to reach the cutter and have information regarding many support programs. The base Duty Officer can put you in contact with her after hours and may be reached at 609-898-6915.

d. It may seem like nothing is working, and you still need to reach the cutter to communicate **emergency** information. A **local Coast Guard unit** in the phone book may be able to provide you with information that points you closer to the cutter.

e. Also, here are numbers for **OPERATIONS CENTERS** in areas that we sail that can contact us at any hour. Explain your situation to the watch stander and ask them to relay a message to have us contact you. **These numbers should only be used for emergencies.** The operations centers are processing cases and cannot be distracted by routine matters.

(1) First District Operations Center: 617-223-8555

(2) Atlantic Area / Fifth District Operations Center: 757-398-6709

(3) Seventh District Operations Center: 305-415-6800

7. Deborah Husak has offered to help with questions regarding contacting the cutter while we are deployed between May and July. She may be reached at 609-898-0806 (the number will be disconnected on July 15th). She does screen calls, so be sure to leave a clear message that includes time, name, call back number, and the nature of the call.

8. I apologize for the disruption of the OMBUDSMAN service. After we complete the summer transfer cycle, we'll again solicit for members to join an OMBUDSMAN TEAM. If you are interested, contact the Executive Officer for more information at 609-898-6800 or by email at wbirch@cgcvigorous.uscg.mil. We will provide training and assist you! This activity helps families with questions tap into the Coast Guard's provided services.

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